# LANL Recovery Act News Flash

Volume 2, Issue 5 May 2010

## Recovery tax dollars at work

Pete Stilwell is leading northern New Mexico to a better economic recovery.

The northern New Mexico senior manager for ARSEC Environmental, LLC has coordinated the recruiting and hiring of 15 workers to help decontaminate and demolish outdated buildings at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

ARSEC Environmental has been awarded about $3.6 million to clean up and remove buildings at Technical Area 21, where lab scientists performed plutonium and tritium research during World War II and the Cold War.

The Recovery Act is paying for the work, which both creates jobs and cleans up the environment for future generations.

Stilwell said the Recovery Act is a big deal for his company and the workers employed there.

"It's increased ARSEC Environmental's revenue stream 50 percent," Stilwell said. "As a small business we really appreciate it."

ARSEC's increased presence at the Lab due to the Recovery Act-funded work has allowed them to be successful in other non-Recovery Act opportunities.

Stilwell's crew is working to remove hazardous materials such as asbestos from old buildings before they are torn down. Many are from northern New Mexico. And not one direct hire was employed before the recent cleanup job came along, he said. All had been laid off from other work.

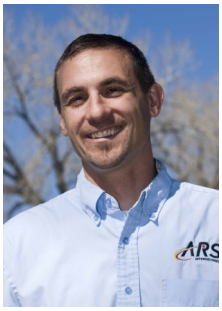


*Photo of Pete Stilwell by Jake Schoellkopf of the New Mexico DOT*

Stilwell's current crew totals 19, including the 15 laborers and four managers. He's hoping to hire another 10 heavy equipment operators and laborers as the project accelerates. A laborer's job pays about $17.25 an hour.

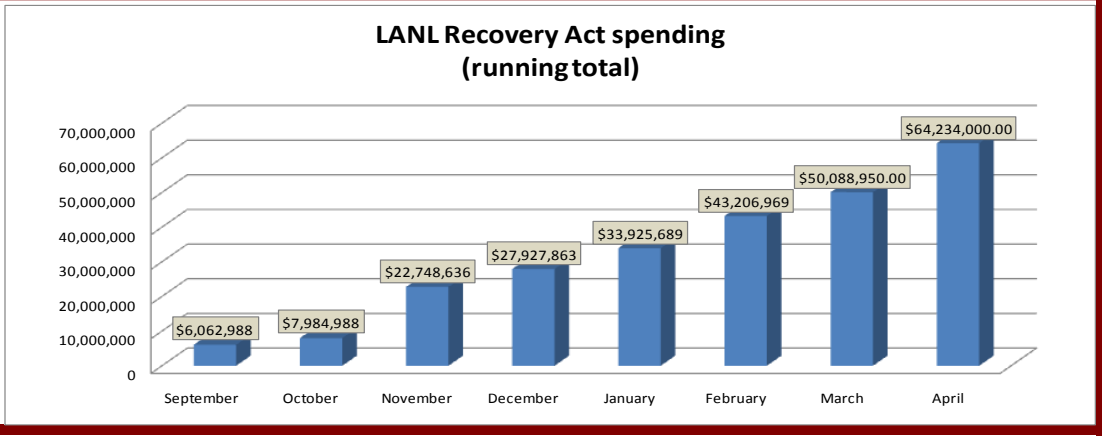
When the overall project is finished, lab officials hope to reduce the footprint of the Lab's buildings by more than 157,000 square feet. Eventually, the land would be available for other uses.

Los Alamos National Laboratory has been awarded $212 million for cleanup, which includes the demolition work, removal of an old waste dump, and new wells to monitor groundwater for possible pollution.

Several small businesses are involved in the jobs, from demolition to trucking.

"It's been a good thing," Stilwell said.

*Reprinted with permission from the New Mexico Office of Recovery and Reinvestment.*




**Stay up to date on LANL's Recovery Act cleanup work at www.lanl.gov**

*"But this wrecking the place quite excites us."—Former LANL scientist John Bartlit, reading a limerick to commemorate work done at the Tritium Systems Test Assembly Facility*

# Fusion researchers gather to say goodbye to facility

## *TSTA building saw early advances in nuclear fusion*

*John Bartlit, left, recites a limerick he wrote to a group of scientists, engineers and operators who worked in TSTA prior to the beginning of demolition.*

About 20 former scientists, engineers and operators gathered at LANL's Technical Area 21 on May 10 for a commemoration at the former Tritium Systems and Test Assembly facility, or TSTA.

At the conclusion, an excavator began tearing away walls of the historic facility—one of 21 Lab buildings and structures set for demolition with Recovery Act funding.

Among the speakers was Jim Anderson, a Lab Fellow and former group leader of the team that performed early research on nuclear fusion.

"All of the work being done in Europe and elsewhere on fusion can be traced right back to the work done at TSTA," Anderson said.

Current commercial nuclear reactors operate on fission—splitting atoms—to generate heat. But fusion—the joining of nuclei, creating heat as a byproduct—holds great promise as a future energy technology, Anderson said.

At TSTA, scientists experimented with joining deuterium and tritium. The program started in 1977, and TSTA was stabilized and shut down in 2003.

"People joke, back then we were 50 years away from fusion—and now, we're still 50 years away," Anderson said. "But we're really much closer now, thanks to that work."

Former LANL and TSTA scientist John Bartlit would write limericks for colleagues as they moved on or retired. On May 10, he read a limerick for TSTA:

"Working shifts through the nights did not blight us
And those Tiger Team bites could not smite us.
The most frightful alarm
Could not ruffle our calm,
But this wrecking the place quite excites us."

# Excavation slated to begin in June

The excavation of Material Disposal Area B (MDA-B), the Lab's oldest waste disposal site, is scheduled to begin in June.

Excavation of the six-acre site will occur inside 13 sturdy metal structures currently being erected. The $94 million project is financed by Recovery Act funding and will be completed by the end of 2010.

The site will be restored to residential standards, meaning houses can be built on it, and will be turned over to Los Alamos County.

*The excavation of Material Disposal Area B, the Lab's first waste disposal site, will occur in 13 enclosures erected on the site. Construction on the first enclosure, above, will be complete in mid-May. Excavation begins in June.*

This News Flash is provided by the Environmental Programs Directorate of Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Questions? Please call 505-665-7748
e-mail:
envoutreach@lanl.gov

LA-UR 10-03285